

MINUTES
GREEN BAY HOUSING AUTHORITY
Thursday, March 19, 2015, 10:30 a.m.
1424 Admiral Court, Second Floor Reading Room
Green Bay, WI 54303

MEMBERS: William VandeCastle - Chair, Sandra Popp - Vice Chair, and B. Hansen

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Brenda Goodlet, Chiquitta Cotton

OTHERS PRESENT: Robyn Hallet, Kim Flom, Stephanie Schmutzer, Nikki Gerhard, Ka Vang, and Sadie DiNatale

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Approval of the February 19, 2015 minutes of the Green Bay Housing Authority.

A motion was made by S. Popp and seconded by B. Hansen to approve the meeting minutes of February 19, 2015, as presented. Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS:

None

OLD BUSINESS:

None

R. Hallet requested to take item eight out of order. Motion to address item eight before item two was made by S. Popp and seconded by W. VandeCastle. Motion Carried.

INFORMATIONAL:

8. Report on comments from Resident Advisory Board and Public Hearing.

R. Hallet informed the Authority that a Public Hearing at a recent Resident Advisory Board Meeting was held per a requirement of the GBHA's Five Year/Annual Plan. The hearing received good attendance and residents were able to listen to a report of last year's achievements along with this year's goals. In addition, CFP funding was conveyed to attendees as was safety and security concerns, flat rent concerns, and the PHA Plan was discussed in full detail. Residents asked many great questions as well as expressed some concerns—most of which were able to be addressed at the hearing immediately and some were agreed to be looked into.

S. Popp asked how long these meetings usually lasted. R. Hallet replied that they generally last about two hours.

S. Popp made a motion to accept the report and place it on file. W. VandeCastle seconded the motion. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

2. Discussion and approval of 2015 Five year/Annual PHA Agency Plan.

R. Hallet discussed the purpose of the Five Year/Annual PHA Agency Plan and explained the many components of the plan. R. Hallet first briefly described the HUD form that the GBHA is required to fill out and submit which ensures that all components of the plan have been accounted for. The form indicates that the GBHA is a small housing authority by HUD's terms and that the GBHA currently stands as a standard performer. R. Hallet went on to discuss this form in detail conveying the GBHA's mission and its goals and objectives for the next five years. There were four goals with 10 different objectives indicated.

S. Popp asked what Goal two, Objective four (Continue to perform quarterly quality control reviews of resident re-certifications) pertained to. R. Hallet replied that every quarter she reviews resident files on-site at Mason Manor to check for accuracy. The purpose is to ensure that proper documentation is recorded and rent calculations have been determined correctly. S. Popp followed up with a question regarding how the review is administered. R. Hallet stated that she chooses four or five files at random and the review process takes half a day, approximately. This review is done for both Scattered Sites and Mason Manor.

In regards to the only objective under the third goal which is to improve the quality of life for GBHA residents, S. Popp asked how this objective would pertain to improving employability of residents. R. Hallet explained that this intention would be most applicable to Scattered Site residents to help them maintain stable employment. R. Hallet went on to state that she would prefer to set up a program where the GBHA could offer more services than simply referring residents to other resource or help centers. S. Popp asked who would administer this program. R. Hallet stated that that has yet to be defined.

B. Hansen asked if achieving the first objective of goal number two (which is to achieve High Performer status at a minimum of three out of the next five years) is feasible. R. Hallet stated that she believes it is achievable in that the Brown County Housing Authority has consistently been a High Performer and GBHA was a High Performer one year out of the last five. Further, GBHA staff members are all very committed to achieving the High Performer status. Once this improved status has been achieved, staff can then create a structured process to maintain the status. R. Hallet went on to state that the GBHA was only two points away from receiving the High Performer status last time.

B. Hansen additionally asked if achieving the 30 day turnaround of vacated units was possible as was recorded in objective three of goal two. R. Hallet stated that staff has already begun the discussion of how to make this goal a reality yet staff is still in the brainstorming phase. N. Gerhard stated that currently if the vacated unit needs rehabilitation, the turnaround period is between 60 to 90 days; if it doesn't require rehab, we strive for 30 days. Nevertheless, more often than not it takes 45 days to turn over a vacated unit.

R. Hallet moved on with the discussion stating that another component of the plan requires that dates be recorded when Plan elements are revised, in which a chart was provided to convey this information. Further, HUD expects the GBHA to look at various area-wide plans to determine the housing needs of the area. These housing needs must coincide with the Five Year/Annual Plan. R. Hallet consulted with the City of Green Bay Consolidated Plan as well as Wisconsin's Department of Administrative Division of Housing's Consolidated Plan to summarize the housing needs within Green Bay's jurisdiction. The identified housing needs were then expressed via strategies for addressing said needs.

S. Popp asked if the GBHA has vouchers set aside for Veterans. R. Hallet stated that the Brown County Housing Authority does but the GBHA does not have vouchers of any kind. In fact, the GBHA does not have any housing set aside specifically for Veterans but there are preferences in place for Veteran families.

B. Hansen inquired further about how we would address the jurisdiction's housing needs. R. Hallet stated that if an opportunity comes our way staff would definitely pursue it but the GBHA would not necessarily have the resources to pursue all the strategies listed. To explain, the GBHA may not be able to pursue all or specific projects to combat homelessness in Green Bay but can be a part of the process to address the issue—for instance, the GBHA is part of the Housing and Homeless Coalition to help address the issue.

R. Hallet briefly discussed the progress of meeting the GBHA's mission and goals to which W. VandeCastle asked if there could be a potential partnership with the new medical college. R. Hallet commented that this was a good idea and inquired about the status of the college. W. VandeCastle stated that he thought that the medical college was up and running but it may be something to look into as he was not entirely sure. W. VandeCastle went on to state that by partnering with the new medical college we may be able to assist their training purposes while also benefiting our residents.

The GBHA could then add the medical college to our list of partnerships (which increasing the number of organizations we partner with is a goal listed in the Plan).

Lastly, R. Hallet explained that there were various forms and resolutions that have to be completed and included with the Five Year/Annual Plan submitted to HUD. These would be addressed individually as the next Agenda items.

Moving on to capital funds, S. Schmutzer stated that another requirement of the Five Year/Annual Plan is to identify and explain how the GBHA expects to use the funds that they receive. Accordingly, staff discussed the needs of Mason Manor and the Scattered Sites for the next five years including wish list items that were conveyed at the Resident Advisory Board meeting. This information was then compiled to determine the most realistic and necessary needs of the GBHA. S. Schmutzer stated that this year the GBHA was awarded \$187,845 in Capital Funds.

R. Hallet stated that anything that is not explicitly stated on the plan, that in the future the GBHA deems significant or necessary to pursue, would have to be presented formally at a public hearing and then resubmitted to HUD. Therefore it's in the GBHA's best interest to include all projects in the Five Year Plan, even if there is little likelihood that all projects would be completed.

B. Hansen asked what happens if some funds are not used; for instance, if one project ends up costing less than what was initially budgeted. S. Schmutzer replied that the excess money would be reallocated into other listed projects. S. Schmutzer also added that these CFP projects are generally larger in nature because these funds have to be obligated within a two year period. Generally smaller cost items are not obligated that far in advance. Then the PHA has four years total to spend the obligated funds.

It was mutually discussed that elevator maintenance would be added to the identified project list for possible use of Capital funds if funds were available after priority tasks were completed.

S. Popp made a motion to approve and place on file the 2015 Five Year/Annual PHA Agency Plan. W. VandeCastle seconded the motion. Motion carried.

3. Adoption of Resolution No. 15-01: PHA Certification of Compliance with the PHA Plan and Related Regulations: Board Resolution to Accompany the PHA 5-Year and Annual PHA Plan.

R. Hallet introduced Resolution No. 15-01 which is a required document that must be submitted with the PHA Five Year/Annual PHA Plan.

S. Popp made a motion to approve Resolution No. 15-01 which was seconded by B. Hansen. Motion carried.

4. Adoption of Resolution No. 15-02: Civil Rights Certification.

W. VandeCastle asked the Authority if there was any discussion or questions before approving Resolution No. 15-02.

B. Hansen made a motion to approve Resolution No. 15-02 which was seconded by S. Popp. Motion carried.

5. Discussion and approval of changes to Chapter 4 (Applications, Waiting List, and Tenant Selection) and 7 (Verification) of Admissions and Continued Occupancy Plan

R. Hallet began the discussion of the changes to Chapter 4 of the Admissions and Continued Occupancy Plan. These changes were specifically related to applicant preference order. The second preference currently states that homeless families with children would receive preference above other families or individuals. GBHA staff realizes that this preference does not account for homeless individuals who have just as much of a need to be housed quickly. Thus, approval is being sought to revise the language of the second preference to read homeless individuals and homeless families with children.

W. VandeCastle asked how veteran family is defined by HUD which is another preference in the chapter. R. Hallet stated that the veteran could be anyone in the household.

In regards to changes made to Chapter 7 of the Admissions and Continued Occupancy Plan, revisions serve to more specifically call out the documentation needed to prove applicants' Brown County residency. In addition, the proposed revision would require applicants to more extensively verify if they are homeless, displaced, or met another preference criterion.

W. VandeCastle asked that each motion be made separately for each of the chapter revisions.

B. Hansen made a motion to approve the changes made to Chapter 4. S. Popp seconded the motion. Motion carried.

S. Popp made a motion to approve the changes made to Chapter 7. W. VandeCastle seconded the motion. Motion carried.

R. Hallet asked if in the future the Authority would like separate agenda items for instances where approval is needed on multiple chapters. The Authority verbally confirmed that they would prefer multiple agenda items.

6. Discussion and approval to Maintenance Policy

N. Gerhard introduced the new item which is amendments made to the GBHA's current Maintenance Policy. N. Gerhard stated that the current Maintenance Plan was very broad and for the most part outdated. Changes were made to bring four different maintenance policies into one plan to make it more inclusive. The plan goes through routine maintenance, inspections, work orders, contracts, and other functions and their schedules on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis. The procedures for maintenance work is very detailed and gets quite specific in certain sections so that when there is staff turnover, services will be able to go on as normal.

R. Hallet commented that the policy should include window washing and carpet cleaning in part II.C. and add the carpet cleaning contractor to part IV. N. Gerhard confirmed that she would make these changes.

B. Hansen asked how the number of inspections per year was determined. N. Gerhard stated that she consulted with maintenance staff and how they carried out inspections currently. The way in which they are performing inspections goes hand in hand with HUD regulations and GBHA policies.

W. VandeCastle inquired about system software that lets one know when specific work order repairs, inspections, and other maintenance activities are scheduled. N. Gerhard stated that the current software they use does send automatic updates; instead she enters these events into her personal calendar and then she updates staff from there. Further, with the new tablets in place the maintenance crew now has access to these same calendars which helps as well.

B. Hansen asked about any recent inspections which N. Gerhard replied that the sprinkler system was just recently inspected to ensure that each floor was functioning properly in case of an emergency.

S. Popp made a motion to approve and place the Maintenance Policy on file to include discussed revisions. W. VandeCastle seconded the motion; motion carried.

7. Discussion and possible action regarding conversion of an apartment into office space and subsequent conversion of current office space into a fitness center.

R. Hallet began the discussion of item seven stating that staff has been considering moving the offices at Mason Manor to another area within the building. There are many reasons for the move including expansion, marketability, and to promote efficiency.

R. Hallet went on to explain that apartment 110 at Mason Manor was originally designed for an on-site maintenance staff member to live in but the unit has never been used for that purpose. Instead, the two-bedroom unit has just been used as another unit for tenants. The unique thing about this apartment is that it has a private outdoor entrance. Staff has been looking to convert this unit into office space which would allow Mason Manor to increase its marketability of the property by converting their current office space into a fitness center. In addition, the new office would provide more room for file storage and, as it is in a location with less resident traffic, staff would be able to increase their efficiency with the decreased number of interruptions they receive in a day.

S. Popp asked where apartment 110 is located. N. Gerhard stated that it was located on the first floor of the north side of the building.

N. Gerhard explained some additional benefits that staff had written on large easel paper posted on the walls for commissioners to see, along with some possible concerns that may inhibit this conversion. Staff met on several occasions to thoroughly discuss the pros and cons of this project.

The pros consist of: more space (individual offices, private meeting space, storage, central file location to accommodate for growth, to free up the maintenance area where some files are stored, for accessibility and security); enhanced exercise room (including more equipment and space, improved marketability, potential for tenant services such as physical rehab for residents who need it, increased ability for residents to age in place, improved health/wellbeing of residents), remodel the tub rooms (which currently double as exercise rooms) for ADA compliant showers and tubs (more space, more private, secure and inviting, increased marketability, increased ability to age in place due to accessibility); improved client satisfaction, specifically for Scattered Site residents who come to the office as well as for Mason Manor residents who desire more confidentiality within the office; outsiders' access to the building is limited since they could enter through the direct exterior entrance; this entrance would also enhance accessibility and ADA compliance; it would allow for potential growth if R. Hallet's office were to move to Mason Manor; it would prevent visitors/Scattered Site residents from parking in tenant-assigned spots since currently unused spots near the entrance would be reserved for short term parking; it would provide for more visibility and inspection of new move-ins and furniture move-ins due to closer proximity to the large elevator; provide a waiting area for residents wanting to speak to staff, allowing for more privacy during appointments and meetings and courtesy to staff; mail delivery would be improved by delivery staff not having to walk through the residents who congregate on the second floor; the model one-bedroom apartment would be put back online, providing an additional one-bedroom unit which is more in demand than two-bedrooms; increased resident satisfaction; more security of money since there would be room for a safe instead of money being stored in desks; relocation of drop box to a more convenient location; removal of staff from the daily disruptions on the second floor, resulting in improved quality and quantity of work and improved atmosphere; minimize visitors "piggy-backing" into the building, which is a security concern.

Some of the cons include: the expense to convert; the staff time involved and that the renovation would be done in phases; an inconvenience to residents and staff to get used to new systems, particularly mail, UPS, or Fed Ex delivery; taking a two-bedroom unit offline; additional common area cleaning would need to be added to cleaning staff's routine; additional monitoring of exercise and tub rooms would be needed; there will be initial resident complaints to deal with; the relocation of the drop box could cause some short term confusion; decreased visibility by staff of emergency vehicles coming to Mason Manor; if R. Hallet's office were to move to Mason Manor that could result in decreased involvement or accessibility with other city officials; would require IT involvement and rewiring; there would only be one instead of two exercise rooms; there would be less privacy for K. Vang as her office space would be more in the open; there would not be a model apartment to use in showings.

N. pointed out the drawing of the space with the potential lay out. She also indicated that the packets contain a written cost analysis.

R. Hallet added that everything would not have to be done right away. There could definitely be implementation stages set into place to offset initial costs.

K. Flom stated that she believed this was a great idea for long term marketability of Mason Manor. It would allow Mason Manor to continue to stay competitive with other housing projects that offer similar if not more amenities at equal or lesser costs. This is a great solution for the long term solvency of Mason Manor.

S. Popp asked about the added one-bedroom unit that N. Gerhard mentioned be put back online. N. Gerhard stated that the unit is currently the model apartment that would be put back on the market as of April 1st whether the office conversion happens or not.

S. Popp opined that this is doable and that if everyone else is ok with it, she is fine with it. She then excused herself as she had another appointment to attend.

N. Gerhard explained that we anticipate the unit in question to become vacant within the next few months because the couple who currently lives there is looking to move to assisted living.

K. Flom asked what the next steps in the process would be. N. Gerhard stated that putting the model unit (Apt 312) back online would be the next step. Then Apt 110, the current two bedroom unit to be converted into an office, would be taken off-line. She has already contacted HUD who confirmed all that needs to be done to accomplish this with HUD is to simply notify them of the effective date of the change. The next step would be for the appropriate contractors need to be contacted to get quotes to determine the scope and real costs of the project.

B. Hansen asked what other amenities Mason Manor is lacking compared to other facilities. R. Hallet stated WIFI is one of the big ones, which staff is currently exploring adding. Another is a lack of private balconies or patios, which is not feasible to add. N. Gerhard stated that a garage or covered parking spots and a swimming pool are other big requests that Mason Manor would never be able to provide due to space concerns. Additionally, larger units and central air have been other wish list items that are not necessarily feasible either.

N. Gerhard stated that the current fitness rooms of Mason Manor are incredibly small and cramped, so expanding the fitness room and adding more equipment would be a huge benefit. Additional exercise equipment is something residents have requested. Since this request is very doable, it makes sense to pursue this request now that space will become available. Moving the current fitness room would also give more privacy to individuals using the tub rooms which currently share a space.

B. Hansen asked about available funding versus cost analysis. S. Schmutzer stated that they already have most of the money to complete this project which comes from spend down funds. For example, the patio reconstruction was completed at a lower cost than originally expected, so there are excess funds available to use toward this.

W. VandeCastle stated that staff should continue to update the Authority on the process moving forward.

R. Hallet stated that action to approve this conversion may be the next step so that staff may go ahead with the next stage of implementation when it presents itself.

B. Hansen asked if staff would use a private firm to construct blueprints for the new office space. N. Gerhard stated they would be seeking professional services for this.

K. Flom asked if a next preliminary step would be to get a potential drawing or blueprints prepared of the new space. This information could then be brought back to the Authority for discussion. N. Gerhard suggested that since there are residents currently living in the unit we may want to wait until the unit is vacant.

K. Flom suggested the action of the Authority could be to direct staff to explore actual layout and refine the costs once the unit becomes available and then this information be brought back to the Authority.

Since there was no longer a quorum, action couldn't be taken, however, W. VandeCastle requested that formal documentation of the pros and cons be included in the packet of information when discussion of the office conversion is brought back to the table again.

Staff offered to show the Commissioners the tub/exercise rooms after the meeting.

FINANCIAL REPORT AND BILLS:

W. VandeCastle stated that due to S. Popp being excused from the meeting early there was no longer a quorum to make official motions. W. VandeCastle asked if there was anything significant on the Agenda that would require Authority attention even though action cannot be taken at this time.

S. Schmutzer stated that there was a spike in Scattered Site investigation expenses. N. Gerhard explained that they have one property where an individual was approved for housing but as it turns out is now unfit to receive public housing per federal and GBHA policy. This individual is currently moving out of the unit.

W. VandeCastle stated that they would wait to make official motions of approval until next month.

STAFF REPORT:

9. Langan Investigations report for the month of February 2015.

This report was tabled as there was not a quorum.

10. Occupancy Report.

This report was tabled as there was not a quorum.

R. Hallet added an additional staff report. R. Hallet stated that the GBHA is currently applying for a FEMA grant in partnership with the Green Bay Fire Department. There was a segment on Channel 2 News regarding this. The grant is to put stovetop Safe-T Elements in the Scattered Site, similar to how this was done at Mason Manor a few years ago.

The GBHA meeting of March, 2015, adjourned at 11:58 am. The next meeting will take place a week later than scheduled, on April 23, 2015, at City Hall, located at 100 N. Jefferson Street, Green Bay, WI 54301.

sd:rah:jd